

N.J. college loses \$1.25M ... for not double spacing grant application



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NEWARK -- Every year since 1999, New Jersey Institute of Technology has offered a college-prep program for low-income high school students from Newark who hope to become the first in their family to attend college.

Now, the program may end, not by way of budget cuts or lack of interest but because the university submitted an application for \$1.25 million in federal funds and didn't double space it.

NJIT is among the [dozens of colleges and organizations](#) nationwide whose application for the federal Upward Bound program was recently rejected for not following new formatting rules put in place this year, according to the university.

The U.S. Department of Education's decision means NJIT won't receive the \$250,000 in annual funding it anticipated over the next five years and, barring a reversal, the university will be forced to cancel the 65-student program, NJIT said.

The university will also need to eliminate a position at its Center for Pre-College Programs, it said.

"NJIT will appeal the decision," the university said in a statement.

[N.J. colleges where professors make the most](#)

The average full professor at New Jersey colleges made \$127,696 in 2015-16, according to new data from the Chronicle of Higher Education.

The decades-old Upward Bound program provides tutoring, counseling and other support for students from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education.

In Newark, the program was open to English language learners from East Side High School, Barringer High School S.T.E.A.M Academy and Barringer High School Academy of Arts and Humanities.

Students had access to Saturday classes in computers, science, math, English, and Spanish at NJIT as well as counseling, mentoring and financial aid workshops, among other opportunities.

According to the federal government's application guidelines for Upward Bound, titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions may be singled spaced. But all text in the application narrative, including charts, tables, figures, and graphs need to be double spaced, with a specific requirement of "no more than three lines per vertical inch."

NJIT did not double space its narrative, according to the university.

The school isn't alone in its formatting ignominy. Other colleges also lost out on the federal money because they failed to double space, used the wrong font or had the wrong size margins, according to a report by The Chronicle of Higher Education.

The rejections have caused an uproar among college officials and lawmakers but concerns were met with little sympathy, according to the report. The U.S. Department of Education did not respond to the Chronicle's request for comment.

Even if the decisions are reversed, the Upward Bound program may still be in jeopardy. It's among a group of education programs [slated for major budget cuts](#) in the Trump Administration's proposed budget.

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